



November 16, 2006 – Flathead High School

Attending

Members: Bill Nelson, Virginia Sloan, Mora McCarthy, Pat Hulla, *FJSWC*; Kris Carlson, Chair, *A Plus Health Care, Inc.*; Patti Gregerson, *Kalispell Area Chamber of Commerce*; Jodi Smith, *FVCC*; Pat Wilson, *KRMC*; Loren Sallee, *Loren's Auto Repair*; Lori Ann Sullivan, *TeleTech*; Allen Whitehead, *CFAC*; Tammi Rardon, *Denman Construction*; Maggie Conry, *Glacier Bank*

Guests & Community Management Team Members: Gretchen Elmore, Michael Barnes, *Plum Creek*; Karen Darrow, Tim Weide, *FVCC*; Jane Gronley, *FJSWC*; Roberta Smith, *Voc ReHab*; Mike Collier, *Putman & Associates*; Lacey Green, *KRMC*; Kermit Vestal, *CFAC*; Claudette Vance, *Flathead Industries*; Dick Ramos, *Career Connections*; Michelle Christensen, *A Plus Health Care*; Paula Funk, *Teletech*; Dan Jones, *Anything Automotive Northwest Equipment*

Tour

The regular business meeting for JSEC was replaced with a tour of Flathead High School and their technology, business, automotive and woodworking classes. The committee has been supportive of education programs that help build a workforce pipeline and connect with the next generation workforce.

Participants on the tour responded to 2 questions about their impressions from the tour. Below are some of the comments: (respondents comments are in red)

- 1. What did you learn on the Flathead High School tour that may be beneficial to you and other business professionals?**
 - *The computer program was varied and sophisticated. There were components to integrate critical thinking skills. The welding shop is in dire need of upgraded equipment and skills. The woodworking shop will definitely need more space to accomplish their goals. Cabinetry will be greatly needed with the massive growth the Flathead is experiencing.*
 - *. . . our high school students are learning about Information Technology at a much higher level than I first thought.*
 - *. . . things have certainly changed since I was a high school student! It gave me a better understanding of this generation and what would appeal to them in the workplace. I immediately noticed that many students were working in very close quarters and in many instances, encouraged to work together, problem solve and share ideas. The environment was very technical and interactive. I think anyone trying to recruit this generation would benefit from actually seeing the learning environment. It gave me a better understanding of what might engage this generation in the workplace!*
 - *In depth level of IT instruction and I am impressed with the current technology available at the school.*
 - *They are teaching our 'next generation' the skills needed to obtain a good living. Unlike our generation, just the basics. We seem to be digging a little deeper and offering a very large database of choices for our youngsters.*
 - *. . . the school is doing a pretty good job with the space they have. I was amazed at how cramped they are for space. I also got a better appreciation for the students. I have a lot of problem seeing the attitudes of so many young people but it looks like there are a lot of them there that are truly trying to learn and make a difference.*

2. How can business connect with education in the future?

- *I think what you are doing, plus working with the Chambers in Whitefish & Kalispell to have them put information in their newsletters periodically that you have tours available. Obviously working with Job Service and JSEC with what the community needs is appropriate. Having skills is one thing, know how to dress and not looking like a tackle box explosion hit one's face is also a valuable component of fitting into the working environment.*
- *By knowing the business needs in the community the educational community can determine the direction to take with course offerings - this is already happening*
- *This type of an event was a great place to start. Perhaps presentations at local civic/business clubs, etc. It would be great for some (perhaps quarterly?) direct mailings to take place that focus on one aspect of the teaching that is taking place at the high school. For example, quarter one might focus on specific types of IT, quarter two might focus on the drafting program, etc. (perhaps you would target your marketing efforts to like businesses?)*
- *Getting employers in front of students and building relationships along with marketing their industries. This generation has so many choices they want to know what's out there. I think local businesses who could donate any type of equipment, machinery, industry technology would greatly benefit.*
- *If students have hands on/relevant experience, maybe they won't feel they need to leave the valley for a job.*
- *We are always open to discussion about internships or field trips to view the site coupled with short workshops to reinforce current curriculum.*
- *Doing more of these types of programs and also finding a way for us to have an audience with the students to convey what is needed in the work place and try to sell them on our careers. We also need to be able to explain to the guidance counselors what it takes to succeed in our businesses and the type of students that would be most likely to succeed with us.*